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Will Be Sirhan Lawyer--Cooper

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A noted trial attorney, Grant B. Cooper, said Monday he will direct Sirhan Bishara Sirhan's defense against a charge of murdering Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

"I'll be in charge of the case," Cooper said. He said he and Russell E. Parsons, who has acted as defense counsel, will be joined by Emile Zola Berman of New York, another noted trial lawyer.

There was no immediate comment from Parsons, a veteran Los Angeles attorney. But he has said he would be joined by a prominent lawyer without identifying him.

The trial of Sirhan, a 24-year-old Jordanian, is set to begin next Monday but Cooper said, "I'd like to have more time" to study the case. He said a continuance will be sought until at least Jan. 6.

Cooper declined to tell newsmen whether Sirhan's defense may be based in part on results of a chromosome test which Parsons has said might prove Sirhan wasn't responsible for his actions.